

see if any delivery date information has been expired (Figure 10, Steps B1 and B3). When there is no delivery date expired, the operation is carried out for the next schedule

information. When there is any delivery date expired (e.g.,

5 delivery date B), the order acceptance of Product A for that delivery date B is closed and the product supplier terminal is informed that the order acceptance for Product A for that delivery date B has been closed (Step B4). The product

10 supplier terminal 30 receives this notice (Step A27). In Step B4, the expired delivery date and the expiring date for that delivery date are deleted from the schedule information. Information relating to the delivery date B for Product A is also deleted from the delivery-date-basis base price menu.

Thereafter, the whole order information of Product A

15 for the delivery date B is extracted from the order information memory 285 (Step B5). Then, the order quantities in the extracted information are summed to determine the total order quantity (Step B6). Based on the price scheme for Product A, a discount rate (e.g., α) corresponding to the

20 total order quantity is determined (Step B7). Then, one of the extracted order information is observed (Step B8) to calculate a period from the time of order to the delivery date contained in that order information and determine a discount rate (e.g., β) corresponding to this period based

25 on the price scheme (Step B10). Then, the final selling price is calculated according to the following equation (8) (Step B11).

Final selling price =

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (\text{standard selling price of Product A}) \times (1 - \alpha/100) \\
 & \times (1 - \beta/100)
 \end{aligned}$$

... (8)

The extracted order information and the final selling
 5 price obtained by the above equation (8) are sent together to
 the buyer terminal 10 that has made that order as well as to
 the product supplier terminal 30 (Step B12). The same
 operation is carried out for the order information following
 the order information extracted in Step B5 (Step B8). When
 10 there is no order information remaining to be observed (i.e.,
 NO in Step B9), the same operation is carried out for one of
 the other schedule information registered in the schedule
 information memory 283 (Step B1). The operation is repeated
 for every schedule information (until the answer in Step B2
 15 becomes NO).

In this manner, the operation in Step N26 is carried out.

The product supplier controlling the product supplier
 terminal 30 produces and delivers the product in accordance
 20 with the order information including the final price sent
 from the order-receiving center terminal 20 (Step A29). The
 purchaser controlling the buyer terminal 10 pays according to
 the order information including the final price sent from the
 order-receiving center terminal 20.

25 Figure 11 is a diagram showing the price fluctuation
 according to the period and quantity of order. The base
 price with no order becomes higher as the date of order
 acceptance becomes closer to the delivery date. Whenever an

order is placed, the price is reset according to the order quantity and the timing. The reset price is applicable to the already-placed orders. Figure 12 is an image showing that such a price resetting can be confirmed on a screen.

- 5 The prices are reduced whenever a new order is made for the corresponding delivery date.

When an order is cancelled later, the price may be raised since the quantity of the ordered products is reduced.

- 10 However, this can be prevented by setting a penalty that is enough to cover the loss of the other intending purchasers who have ordered the same product for the same delivery date.

- 15 Thus, no loss is imposed on the other intending purchasers or the product supplier. According to the above-described example, the purchasing quantity for a single delivery date is not particularly limited. However, since there is a limit

to the number of products that can actually be provided, the limit quantity may be presented on the delivery-date-basis base price menu in advance. According to the above-described example, the price scheme is not changed through the whole

- 20 process. However, the price scheme may be altered before a first order is received (until then no loss is caused).

Although a penalty is imposed when an order is cancelled, the order may be cancelled without a penalty within a predetermined period or a predetermined quantity. Although

- 25 there is no means for informing the start of order acceptance to possible purchasers in the above-described example, information including the start of the order acceptance may be distributed in an active manner because faster order